

REMARKS

This application has been reviewed in light of the Office Action dated December 28, 2004. Claims 1-17 and 26 are presented for examination. Claims 1, 11, 12, 17 and 26, the independent claims, have been amended to define more clearly what Applicants regard as his invention. Favorable reconsideration is requested.

Claims 1-17 and 26 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102 as being anticipated by U.S. Patent 6,275,303 (Fukaya).

Independent Claim 1 is directed to an image processing apparatus that comprises generation means for generating a bitmap image on the basis of inputted object data, and hold means for holding attribute information representing a plurality of different types of attributes of the inputted object data in units of pixels of a bitmap image generated by the generation means. According to Claim 1, the attribute information is formed by allocating plural bits to each pixel of the bitmap image. Also provided in the apparatus of Claim 1 are conversion means for converting the generated bitmap image into data capable of being processed by an image output unit, and switch means for switching the contents of processing for each pixel of the bitmap image on the basis of a combination of the plurality of different types of attributes represented by the attribute information held by the hold means.

Among other important features of an apparatus according to Claim 1 are the hold means that hold attribute information representing different types of attributes, in units of individual pixels of a bitmap image, and that feature that the attribute information in question is formed by allocating plural bits to each pixel. Another important feature is switching contents of processing for each pixel in the bitmap, based on a combination of the different types of attributes indicated by the relevant attribute information. (An example of

an embodiment having such features is provided at page 16, line 24, through page 17, line 15, of the present application; it is of course to be understood that the claim scope is not limited by the details of any preferred embodiment.)

By virtue of these features, it is possible to apply varied, and appropriate, processing to each pixel of a bitmap image. In addition, because the processing contents change based on the attribute information allocated to each pixel, the necessary processing changes are managed without the need to designate areas within the image.

Fukaya has been extensively discussed in previous prosecution, and it is not deemed necessary to repeat that discussion in full. Applicants note, however, that while in the *Fukaya* apparatus, PDL including various commands is used, as illustrated in Figs. 3A to 3H, nothing has been found, or pointed out, in that patent that would teach or suggest allocating to each pixel of a bitmap image attribute information that represents a plurality of types of attributes, as recited in Claim 1. The *Fukaya* apparatus performs switching binarization processing during the processing of a continuous tone image (see steps S12 - S15 of Fig. 2), or changing a dither pattern used by means of a prescribed command (see Fig. 2, steps S19 and S20), but these are done based on a single command number. Since these switches are made merely on the basis of a single command number, it would far exceed the ordinary skill to find any reason to provide for multiple types of attribute information to be provided and used in pixel-by-pixel allocation of attribute information as is recited in Claim 1. For at least those reasons, Claim 1 is believed to be clearly allowable over *Fukaya*.

Independent Claims 11, 17 and 26 are computer memory medium, method and non-means-plus-function apparatus claims respectively corresponding to apparatus Claim 1, and independent Claim 12 is directed to a system that has the features recited in Claim 1. All

these claims, therefore, are believed to be patentable for at least the same reasons as discussed above in connection with Claim 1.

A review of the other art of record has failed to reveal anything which, in Applicants' opinion, would remedy the deficiencies of the art discussed above, as a reference against the independent claims herein. Those claims are therefore believed patentable over the art of record.

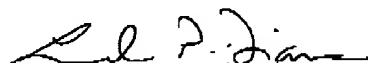
The other claims in this application are each dependent from one or another of the independent claims discussed above and are therefore believed patentable for the same reasons. Since each dependent claim is also deemed to define an additional aspect of the invention, however, the individual reconsideration of the patentability of each on its own merits is respectfully requested.

This Amendment After Final Action is believed clearly to place this application in condition for allowance and its entry is therefore believed proper under 37 C.F.R. § 1.116. At the very least, however, it is believed that the formal rejections have been overcome, and cancellation of Claims eliminates all issues relating to those claims. Accordingly, In any event, however, entry of this Amendment After Final Action, as an earnest effort to advance prosecution and reduce the number of issues, is respectfully requested. Should the Examiner believe that issues remain outstanding, he she is respectfully requested to contact Applicants' undersigned attorney in an effort to resolve such issues and advance the case to issue.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully requests favorable reconsideration and early passage to issue of the present application.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our New York Office by telephone at (212) 218-2100. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our address listed below.

Respectfully submitted,



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